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SENSITIVE

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SUBJECT: MAYSAN: AMBASSADOR URGES SADRIST PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH GOI

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¶1. (U) This is a Maysan PRT report.

¶2. (SBU) During a December 18 meeting in the provincial capital Amarah, the Ambassador encouraged the Sadrish Provincial Council Chair and the ISCI Deputy Governor to work to improve the provincial government's strained relationship with the GOI and to take advantage of USG assistance programs that will develop as a result of the Security Agreement and Strategic Framework agreements. The PC Chair and Deputy Governor raised common Maysani concerns about the perceived lack of GOI efforts to address problems with the oil, education and electricity sectors and to combat the extensive unemployment that continues to plague Maysan. The Ambassador encouraged provincial officials to work with other provincial governments to share best practices on how to stimulate economic recovery. The Ambassador thanked the PC Chair and Deputy Governor for the provincial government's efforts to strengthen the relationship with the PRT and Coalition Forces (CF, and to coordinate reconstruction assistance. End Summary.

¶3. (SBU) During a two-day trip to Maysan province on December 17-18, the Ambassador met with Sadrish PC Chair Chairman Abdul Jabbar Wahid Homaydi and Deputy Governor Abdul Hussein Abdul Radha (ISCI) at the Government Center in the provincial capital, Amarah. The Ambassador thanked the PC Chair and Deputy Governor for their efforts to strengthen relations between the Sadrish-controlled provincial government and the PRT and CF. The PC Chair responded, "We feel the effects of this relationship and thank you for it," adding that the team leader has other good ideas and has encouraged the provincial government to implement projects using their own resources. The Ambassador also urged the provincial government to continue mending its strained relationship with the GOI.

¶4. (SBU) The Ambassador heard common provincial frustrations about GOI inattentiveness to provincial struggles to repair its defunct oil infrastructure, reduce unemployment, rebuild the education system, and address shortages of electricity and clean drinking water, for which the PC Chair and Deputy Governor appealed for additional USG assistance and intervention with the GOI. The Ambassador agreed Maysan possesses vast oil and gas potential, and encouraged provincial officials to lobby the GOI to pass legislation to create the necessary legal structure to develop resources for the good of the country.

¶5. (SBU) The Ambassador also encouraged provincial officials to take advantage of programs that will develop as a result of the recent Security Agreement (SA) and Strategic Framework Agreement (SFA). The SFA, for example, calls for bilateral cooperation in a variety of fields, and the recently signed GE turbine contract will double Iraq's generation capacity to 14,000 MW. He added that provincial leaders should work with the Ministry of Electricity to ensure Maysan receives its share. The Ambassador also described other areas of future U.S./I, and emphasized that the provincial government should look to expand the PRT's current collaboration with Maysan University.

¶6. (SBU) The PC Chair boasted about the provincial government's efficiency in executing its budget, and told the Ambassador that other provinces were learning from Maysan's example. The Ambassador encouraged provincial officials to work with other provincial governments to share best practices on how to stimulate economic recovery.
Qrecovery.

7 (SBU) Deputy Governor Radha asked the Ambassador to intervene on Maysan's behalf concerning water resources, noting that Turkey was diverting large quantities of water. He also raised unemployment, emphasizing the need for vocational training to put Maysanis back to work. He stressed that outside investment was necessary to rehabilitate the factory system in Maysan and to help absorb the unemployed. He added that secondary schools and the government-sponsored university systems were not up to standard, and requested assistance to build a new university and develop scholarship programs for study-abroad programs. The Ambassador responded that the PRT was looking at ways to address these problems through vocational training assistance and microfinance programs to stimulate small business development.

¶8. (SBU) PC Chair Hoymadi concluded the meeting by emphasizing to the Ambassador that tribal support councils were unhealthful for Maysan because the tribes no longer wielded the influence they once did. He pointed out that although many tribal members were candidates in the last elections, few were elected. He also cautioned that the tribal system should not become an alternative to the provincial government. The Ambassador raised tribal leaders' concerns that the provincial government had refused to provide assistance to the tribes, to which the PC Chair responded that tribal leaders had insisted on receiving funding directly to implement their own projects, rather than through the provincial

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governments' overseeing project development. Following the meeting, the Ambassador and his delegation shared lunch with the PC Chair and Deputy Governor.

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